

The Board of Directors of CUE, Inc., is approved comments to the FCC on the E-Rate NPRM, proceeding 13-184.

E-Rate has been critical to California schools since it has helped our students and teachers gain access to a wealth of online resources, communicate and collaborate, and develop the 21st century skills necessary for college and career. However, E-Rate funding levels have not kept pace with our schools bandwidth needs. CUE urges you to increase E-Rate funding to at least \$5 billion per year, which is close to the average demand level for each of the past two years.

Along with many other states, California is initiating online student testing established by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC). This new assessment system was recently authorized by State legislation (AB 484) making it mandatory that all students have equal access to high speed Internet. This makes it critical that E-Rate funding be sufficient to meet this new and emerging demand for Internet service.

Since the beginning of the E-Rate program, funding support has been dependent upon the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) participation rates for the students in the applying district. It is now clear that access to the Internet is not an optional component to a quality education. Because of this, CUE further encourages the FCC to eliminate the costly and time consuming E-Rate application process and fully fund all school connections, regardless of NSLP rates.

Many areas of California are quite rural. Connection costs in these areas are substantially higher than those in urban areas and, even though educational equity demands that both populations are served equally, the cost per student served is substantially higher in rural areas.

As an organization, CUE believes that seamlessly infusing digital learning throughout the curriculum is a prerequisite for students to graduate from high school with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in today's global economy. Access to high-speed broadband is the key to allowing modern teaching and learning to occur in all schools across the country.

The E-Rate program has been a phenomenal success in bringing Internet access to almost every classroom in America. In the last funding cycle, applications from schools and libraries requested a total of more than \$5 billion—twice the amount of available funding. CUE respectfully urges the FCC to increase funding for the E-Rate program to at least \$5 billion to meet this demand.

All students need access to high-speed broadband. Our nation's future depends on their success.

About CUE:

CUE is a nonprofit educational corporation founded in 1978. CUE's goal is to advance student achievement through technology in all disciplines from preschool through college. With an active current membership of thousands of educational professionals, CUE supports many regional affiliates and Special Interest Groups. CUE Conferences are California's premier educational technology events. CUE is the largest organization of its type in the west and one of the largest in the United States.
www.cue.org

CUE is the regional affiliate for the International Society of Technology in Education (ISTE) www.iste.org and the International Association for K12 Online Learning (iNACOL) www.inacol.org."